

searing sunraze smash

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searing sunraze smash

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Summary

Alina has gone into hiding.

Aleksander didn't want to believe it at first.

Notes

listen it was so tempting to do the shadow bone title /def not planning an earlier au fic that would work for that
for dick or treat & MAD ficathon

Alina has gone into hiding.

Aleksander didn't want to believe it at first. Kept expecting her to show up with her mortal friends, to challenge him, to expose him to the world, to do *something*. Anything.

But as the seasons change, his sun summoner remains cloaked in darkness, and there's only so much anger he can hold at her hiding within his domain. The very concept is soothing.

She lives. Broken as their amplifier connection is, he can still feel her, still dreams of her. That's the problem with working with magic over small science – never know what side effects there may be.

For all the centuries he's awaited her creation, waiting now, knowing she's out there, is a new cruelty. The years pass slow, borders reshaped and new monarchs come into power. He was going to gift her a kingdom once, turn her into an empress. A coup falling into place as mother dearest decided to upend his plans once more. (She's hiding out in Ketterdam now, they both pretend he doesn't know.)

Genya dies, takes General Kirigan with her. His spy outlasted the heartrender, didn't expect that. He spends a few decades out of the public's light, best to let people forget before claiming to be his own nephew.

It doesn't take much, people have such short memories.

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Genocide isn't pretty but the Fjerdans make it more tempting every day with their weapons development.

Pretty is the concept of eliminating mortals. His sun summoner walks the earth, there is no need for other people. They could be the only two, become true gods, start a new race of people should Alina wish it. A world of only them and their descendants – a reflection of themselves in all that exist.

It is only a question of waiting on humanity to die or helping it along. Surely, it would be far crueller to watch the species limp along, slowly killing itself.

Alina is too young to see it still, knows this even as he hasn't seen her in over a century. There are whispers of her helping grisha children, of the shaded saint.

The appellation shouldn't be so appealing, but he can see her nose scrunching up when she hears it, perhaps even her fingers curling into fists.

He takes a new name, Marat Yolkin. Doesn't gather grisha to him this time, takes his own castle near the northern border, ensures none cross into New Ravka. A small, humble life Marat has.

A small, humble trap for his dearest sun summoner.

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It takes nearly a decade before Alina lightens his doorway. She has changed so much and so little, has become an immortal. (He wonders, aches to know if she's lost her last slip of humanity yet, if she's accepted her own unending.)

He rushes to her, fingers trembling over her face, proof she isn't an illusion. Touch as light as it can be, and still, a current jumps between them.

"Alina," he breathes, could drop his hand, grip the antlers and mount her to the nearest wall, show her just how much-

"Aleksander." Her eyes are wet, voice angry, "How could you? You knew, you knew what fate awaited us."

"I did it for us. I told you, you'll never be alone Alina."

"Damn you," she snaps. "You're the only one left. Knew it would turn into this."

His thumb strokes beneath her jaw, the allowance heady. "Do you truly think so little of me? That I remember what it was like to fear death? To not know how quickly a friend can go from a child to the grave?"

"Yes," her voice is quick with conviction.

He smiles at her, can't help it. "Then tell me, why did you seek me here?"

"Good question," she spits out, steps back.

"Wait-" he calls, "Alina!"

Steps outside of his castle into blistering light, blinding for a blink, and then she's gone.

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Aleksander can't stop replaying their meeting.

Can't stop imagining how different it could've gone. If he'd grabbed her antlers, if he'd demanded she hold him prisoner within his own home, if she would've taken him in hand to save the world. If she would've trapped him within a sphere of light, or pulled on his shadows, return him to the darkness.

If she would have touched him.

A good imagination is a cursed thing.

(Is it a curse or boon that he can't remember who told him that?)

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Ravka is one country again when Alina visits him next. It is a time between names, and he lives near enough to the Fold that none seek out the house.

There's an enchanting determination in her eye. "Today I'm taking down the Fold. You will assist me. Alone."

"No fanfare? Pity."

Her gaze goes flinty, "I can wear your bones if you'd rather."

His throat goes dry, imagines his finger bones trapped over her clavicle, as though clasping-unclasping her cloak. To become one forevermore.

"Tempting."

She rolls her eyes, and there's something gratifying about her misreading him.

"Get your horse."

He doesn't question her plan, won't be the one to delay salvation. (There's a tiny piece of him, boyish hope never fully crushed, that whispers the volcra might revert to grisha, might still live.)

She rides confidently, gallops to the Fold, Aleksander following a stride behind. Creates a tunnel of light when the volcra come, hoards of them attracted by their energy. Alina stops when her horse tires, deep enough into the Fold that there is no light except for that she wields.

She dismounts, turns the tunnel to a dome of light. Nostalgia socks him in the gut, if only he'd played things a little differently back then. (Foolish to keep his mother around, he knows better.)

"Lay here," Alina says, nods to a patch of deep sand.

He waits until he's on the ground to make a comment, "Am I to play bait?"

Alina snorts as a pair of volcra dive into her shield, bounced back. "I'm sure you can guess your role here Heretic."

His fingers clench, nearly asks about her dead lover. (She must've known he'd keep tabs on her, listen to every tale of the sun summoner and her most devoted. A bitter pride that she never fully eluded him, finding a girl of the shadows to call her own for a time.)

Alina sits atop him, fingers sliding into his clothes and opening them up. His breathing quickens, can't believe this isn't a trap. Grains of sand already itching at his back do point towards reality. "Alina?"

Her eyes snap up to his, buttons snapping off. "Not a word. I will wear a lattice of your bones."

He can't hide the shiver, not with her straddling him.

Her eyes light up, "You'd like that."

She laughs, nearly looks like before, stripping her pants. "Of course. You do know, Aleksander, I would be able to control *you*. If you survived."

She tosses her words so casually, but there's a waver in her voice that he seizes, reaches up to brush her cheek.

"I wouldn't condemn you to an eternity alone."

Alina chokes, small fists striking his chest, "Stop it."

"You'll always have me."

She grabs his cock, startling even after she tore his clothes open. "I said stop it."

He does, and the dome of light has grown smaller, brighter. He throbs in her small hand, tight around the base and still, and still given enough time he's sure he could reach completion like this.

"I hate you," she murmurs, and Aleksander will take her attention in whatever form she wishes. Will take – she sits upon his cock fully, throws her head back with a groan. His eyes fall closed but for a moment, wet heat and pressure overwhelming. Her entire weight is on him, so very close to all he wants.

He reaches up for her, thumb brushing over her lips, "Alina."

Her eyes reflect the light around them, burn with it, and she takes his thumb in, teeth chomping down. The sharp pain sends his nerves spinning. Her hips move slowly, every rock a new pleasure. Her hair falls down as she moves, ebony against the light from within escaping.

Her skin glows with it now, hands reach up to the sky, demanding its brightest light. He can't keep looking, and even eyes shut tight there is a shining figure. A ball of light grows above her, Alina riding him faster as it expands.

She releases his thumb, and for all her skin burns him when he touches it, he does, already covetous of this very moment, touches all he can reach. Her waist and hips, the dip of her back, cups her breasts, reaches higher, blood singing with echoed power as he touches the antlers.

"Aleksander, now!"

He comes for her, an explosion of light above brightening every last corner of the Fold. In that moment it is gone, knows it, can't feel it anymore.

A shadowy blanket covers the ground in the aftermath, until he notices, draws it back in. She doesn't take hers back, a ball of light flickering around them.

For the most wonderful of moments, there is pure joy, satisfaction splashed across her face. She looks down at him, a benevolent goddess, kisses his forehead before rising.

“It is done.”

And it isn't fair how quickly she rises, how easily she leaves his embrace. How he is still shoving his ripped shirt together as she's fully dressed, looking around at the desolate land that was once the Fold.

“Saints,” she whispers, dome of light dissipating.

There's movement out of the corner of his eye, Aleksander jumping up, calling and reaching for her, “Alina!”

She jumps backwards, away from him, and a child's body crashes to the ground between.

“The volcra,” Alina says, voice soft. “You did this to them.”

“I didn't-”

“You knew what you were doing Aleksander,” she spits out. “You always do. You don't care about the cost.”

“Neither do you apparently,” he says, and her hand twitches, sure he would've been slapped if they were closer. Wishes they were.

The idea of not seeing, not feeling her for another century has pleading words racing past his lips, “Please. Alina, I swear to you-”

She laughs, cruel and beautiful. Looks infinite for once. Walks around the body to him, close enough to touch, close enough to rake her nails through his beard. (Longer than before, he can't help but think. Wonders if that means she's been mapping less.)

“Tell me when you find my parents.”

The words strike him as he thought no longer possible, and Alina gets back on her horse, hair flowing in the wind as she gallops away.

Aleksander sighs at the sheer multitude of bodies, every direction he looks. At the idea of how many more have shallow graves. It will take an age to give them all proper burial rites, is sure Alina has rather strong feelings about mass graves and the like. With another sigh, Aleksander mounts up, will return with the proper tools.

The things he does for love.

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